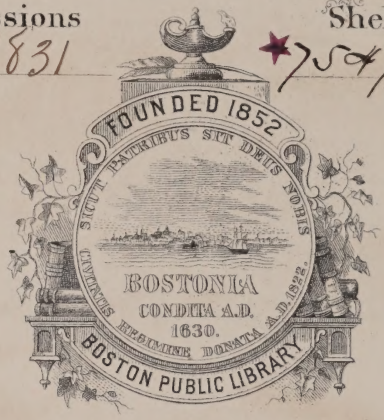
BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 9999 08631 362 2

Accessions 427.831

Shelf No. ★7547.42



Received Mar. 16, 1889.

Trinitarian Congregationalism in Concord.

TRINITARIAN CONGREGATIONALISM IN CONCORD.

AN HISTORICAL DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED AT CONCORD, MASS.,

JUNE 4, 1876,

ON OCCASION OF THE COMPLETION OF THE FIRST HALF CENTURY OF THE TRINITARIAN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

BY REV. HENRY M. GROUT,

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH.

PRINTED BY REQUEST.

BOSTON:

THOMAS TODD, PRINTER, CONGREGATIONAL HOUSE,

NO. 1 SOMERSET STREET,

1876.

B.H.
427.831
Mar. 16. 1889

Historical Discourse.

"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."—*1 Samuel, vii. 12.*

This church to-day witnesses the completion of the first half-century of its existence. To some, this period may seem too short and uneventful to furnish material for a formal historical review. But, though not yet venerable with age, the church has had experiences of divine favor which call for grateful recognition. Not the least of these is that, in all these years, God has sustained the faith of this flock, and caused the order of his house to be here maintained, and the saving truths of his gospel to be here preached, until now. It cannot be an unfitting time to raise a memorial of past trials escaped, and past mercies enjoyed, and to inscribe upon it: "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

To any proper understanding of our history, indeed, to justify our existence, it is needful that we go farther back than the date of our own organization. The formation of this church did not mark the beginning of the work of Christ in Concord, either in its purity or its power.

The first settlers of New England were not ordinary men, nor did they come hither as adventurers seeking their own fortunes. They were choice and stalwart men; vigorous in intellect, of large intelligence, and resolute wills. And they came to plant the institutions of a holy religion. Said Higginson: "They were men of great renown in the

nation from whence the Laudian persecution exiled them. Their learning, their holiness, their gravity, struck all men that knew them with admiration. They were Timothies in their houses, Chrysostoms in their pulpits, Augustines in their disputations." Said Thomas Prince: "There never was perhaps before seen such a body of pious people together on the face of the earth. For those who came over first came for the sake of religion, and for that pure religion which was entirely hated by the loose and profane world." Said Hugh Peters, in a sermon before Parliament: "I have lived in a country seven years, and in all that time, I never heard a profane oath, and never saw a man drunk. That country was New England."

Of just this sort was the little band which, less than twenty years after the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, found their way hither, "through unknowne woods," and planted here a Church of Christ. Literally they brought the church with them. It was organized at Cambridge, then New-Town, July 5, 1636. According to Cotton Mather it was the 12th, and according to Winthrop the 13th, in the Colony. After the fashion of those days, it had two ministers at first. These were Rev. Peter Bulkeley, and Rev. John Jones. Both were installed at Cambridge the early part of the next year. A warm controversy had just sprung up as to whether evidence of acceptance with God was in part visible, and furnished by a holy life, or entirely invisible, depending upon an inward assurance or revelation from heaven. Those who held the former view, of whom Mr. Bulkeley was one, were stigmatized, by the other party, as "legalists" and believers in a "covenant of works." Doubtless both were partly right. But so high did feeling run, that neither the governor, nor his deputy, nor any of the church in Boston, consented to be present at the installation.

There is no record of the membership of the church in these early days. Some difference arising between the two ministers, Rev. Mr. Jones, with a portion of the flock, removed to Connecticut at the end of eight years. Sometime after their departure, the whole number of families in the town was said to be fifty, and of souls in the church seventy. Nor is there any authentic statement of its doctrinal belief. Of this, however, there can be no doubt: The churches in the colony all very early gave their formal assent to the doctrines set forth in the Catechism of the Westminster Assembly of Divines. Shattuck, in his History of Concord, says: "'Letchford's Plain Dealing' mentions the church in Concord as the first one in the colony which had adopted the practice of catechizing the children." What Letchford actually says, is that candidates for the church were catechised upon their admission to it; and that this was done in other places as well as here. "There is," he tells us, "no catechizing of children, or *others*, in any church, (except in Concord church, and in other places, *of those admitted, in their receiving*.")

The church was fortunate in its first ministers. Of the two, Mr. Bulkeley was the most remarkable. He was of high birth, ample learning, and ardent piety. He was "esteemed, in his day, one of the greatest men in this part of the world." Until nearly fifty years of age, he had been a successful preacher in his native town of Woodhull, England, where he succeeded his father, Edward Bulkeley, D. D., as a minister of the English Church. Non-conformity to the ceremonials of that church at length provoked against him the displeasure of Archbishop Laud, and he was silenced. His comfortable fortune would have enabled him to live in quiet dignity in his own land; but "the concern his renewed soul had for the pure worship of our Lord Jesus Christ, and for the planting of evangelical

churches to exercise that worship," brought him hither. He was firm in his principles; and yet affable in his manners. He was devoted to his work, and never lost an opportunity to press home the duties of religion. His benevolence was remarkable. The Indians spoke of him as "the man of the *big pray!*" He was respected throughout the Colony, and one of the moderators of the famous Synod of 1637. His "Gospel Covenant," printed in 1641, moved President Styles of Yale College to write of him: "Mr. Bulkeley was a masterly reasoner in theology. I consider him . . . . equal to the first characters in theology in all Christendom, and in all ages." He was especially solicitous that his own flock, and all the other churches, should continue in the good way they had begun. Like a Moses to an Israel in the wilderness, he writes: "The Lord looks for more from thee than from other people, more zeal for God, more love to his truth, more justice and equity in thy ways; thou shouldest be a *special* people, an *only* people, none like thee in all the earth. Oh, be so, in loving the gospel, and the ministers of it."

It is certainly a matter for present gratitude that the foundations were here laid under a ministry of such natural gifts and spiritual graces; of such learning, self-denial, and devotion to Gospel truth.

Of the church during the remainder of its first hundred years, not much need here be said. Rev. Peter Bulkeley was succeeded by his son, Rev. Edward Bulkeley, who, like his father, had been educated in England. His pastorate lasted thirty-six years; though from March, 1694, to his death in January, 1696, he performed no regular ministerial service, and received a diminished salary. He came from Marshfield, where he had been previously settled sixteen years. In talents and piety he was a worthy son of his more distinguished father, and, after his death, was referred to as "the famous Mr. Bulkeley."

Rev. Joseph Estabrook was associated with Rev. Edward Bulkeley, as his colleague, for nearly thirty years, and survived him in the pastorate fifteen. An obituary notice pronounced him "a most orthodox, learned, and worthy divine; laborious in the ministry, and of holy life and conversation." His city admirers thought, "He was too bright a star to be muffled up in the woods amongst the Indians, and ought to come to Boston where he could do more good." A dozen years after the settlement of Mr. Estabrook, the families in the town had increased to "some few above a hundred." Luxuries did not yet greatly abound. The public schools taught little besides reading and writing; "grammar scholars" were taught by Mr. Estabrook.

The next minister was Rev. John Whiting: hospitable and generous, says his epitaph: "a man of wealth, learning, influence, and talents," says Mr. Shattuck. His ministry of twenty-five years was chiefly remarkable for its unhappy termination. For violation of the gospel rule: "A bishop must be blameless, vigilant, *sober*, and of good behavior," an ecclesiastical council, in 1735, advised his temporary suspension from the ministry. This, however, appears to have failed to effect the desired reformation. And two years later, by the advice of another "venerable council," he was deposed from his sacred office.

The second century of the Church of Christ in Concord, began with the settlement of Rev. Daniel Bliss. He was chosen by the church in August, 1738, and finally, after some difficulties and delays, ordained the following March. His ministry was not a peaceful one. It was quite otherwise. But it was marked by great earnestness and power, and its results were abundant and precious. To understand it, one must know the times on which it fell.

As early as 1662, an important change had been introduced into the practice of the New England churches. By the Synod of that year it had been decided that persons, who had themselves been baptized, and were not "scandalous in life," might, by a simple assent to the received doctrines, become in part members of the church. They might bring their own children to baptism. This was the famous "half-way covenant." Some years later there followed a greater innovation. It originated with Rev. Solomon Stoddard of Northampton. In 1707, he began publicly to advocate the theory that the Lord's Supper is a converting ordinance; and that unconverted persons should be encouraged to come to the Lord's Table. The theory soon gained wide acceptance. The churches began to be filled with persons who confessed that they had had no experience of religion in its power. Yet they felt that they were in the right and safe way. For a renovation of the heart and life, they looked to some mysterious influence, to be derived through the observance of ordinances. But, good enough to be in the church soon came to be good enough to be in the ministry. Mr. Shattuck thus refers to the state of things which followed: "Much of the zeal which had characterized the churches at an early period had subsided; the sermons from the desk had become cold and formal; and spiritual lethargy and indifference ensued." These remarks, he adds, were not inapplicable to "the particular history of Concord."

But there was another side to the outlook of the churches. Influences were already at work to check this downward movement, and save the churches from general apostacy. In December, 1734, began the great revival, under the preaching of Edwards, at Northampton. Within a year and a half the hopeful converts numbered more than three hundred. The work spread. Other towns

along the Connecticut River, and farther inward, were shaken and blessed. Then came Whitefield; young, fearless, earnest; with a burning ardor for souls, and a marvellous eloquence, the spell of which neither age, power, nor learning could quite resist. At first the "clear music of his youthful voice" was heard and welcomed in all the churches in Boston. When he preached his first farewell on the Common, he supposed he had thirty thousand people to hear him. Fifty thousand converts were added to the churches in the revivals that followed. But he spoke with too much plainness of an unconverted ministry. He openly lamented the low state of religion in the College at Cambridge. He encouraged lay preaching. He set the dangerous example of extempore preaching. The revivals were not without excesses. And, by the time of Whitefield's second visit to New England, colleges, conventions, and associations were bristling with testimonials against him. Half the ministers in Massachusetts were either openly opposed to his work, or spoke with hesitation of its good results. Rev. Daniel Bliss began his ministry in Concord just after the revivals in the Connecticut valley under Edwards. He came from Springfield, which had shared the visitation. He began his work in the spirit of those revivals. When Whitefield came, he was ready to receive him. Twice he gave him welcome to Concord. The neighboring ministers of Acton and Sudbury and Lexington and Bedford and Weston and Marlboro and Stow, on Whitefield's second visit to New England, all signed testimonials against him, and declared that thenceforth they would not admit him to their pulpits. Mr. Bliss was an open defender of the revivals, and signed a testimonial for him. He preached the same truths, in the same extemporaneous and impassioned manner. One result of all this, following upon the previous lethargy of the

church, was a defection, and withdrawal, of a portion of its members. Exceptions were taken to his doctrines and discipline. He was thought too zealous and enthusiastic. He was charged with indiscretions and errors. Councils were called, and they made matters no better. But, meanwhile, the fruits of his labors were abundant. Hundreds sought his advice. He died in the prime of his manhood. But in a ministry of twenty-five years, he had received to full communion in the church two hundred and ninety persons, besides whom three hundred and twenty-eight had owned the covenant. Of his last sermon, Mr. Whitefield, who was present and heard it, said: "If I had studied my whole life, I could not have produced such a sermon." Next to that of Rev. Peter Bulkeley, his ministry was the most remarkable the town had yet enjoyed. And for its troubles neighboring ministers, and the decline of religious faith and practice which preceded his coming, were quite as much responsible as himself.

The ministry of Rev. William Emerson was not a long one. But short as was his career, and youthful as he was when overtaken by death, he was greatly esteemed and deeply lamented. His preaching has been described as "popular, eloquent, persuasive, and devotional;" his doctrine as "evangelical;" and his character as "enthusiastic, affectionate and pious." He was a true patriot as well as a devout Christian. Joining the army at Ticonderoga as chaplain, he was prostrated by sickness, and died, in the tenth year of his ministry, at the age of thirty-three.

Our present interest in the ministry of Rev. Ezra Ripley is two-fold. It was long continued, dignified and able. And it was toward its end that a company of devout and faithful men and women withdrew to organize the church, the fiftieth anniversary of which we to-day celebrate.

Down to this time there had been no important changes

in the doctrinal faith of the church. In 1749, while Mr. Bliss was its pastor, the church had affirmed "its belief of, and subjection to, the word of God," "an excellent compendium of which," they go on to say, "we judge to be contained in the Shorter Catechism of the Assembly of Divines." This affirmation is repeated in a similar covenant, prepared the last year of Mr. Emerson's ministry, and signed, as before, by both the pastor and the brethren of the church.

Nor were any changes introduced during the first seventeen years of Mr. Ripley's labors. He was ordained in the autumn of 1778. A few months after, a new form of covenant, for persons admitted to baptism, was prepared by a committee of whom the pastor was one. In this the deity of Christ is affirmed in stronger terms than we find in any previous records. "In particular," says this covenant, "you do take God the Father to be your Father in heaven; God the Son, to be your alone Mediator, Surety and Intercessor; and God the Holy Ghost to be your Sanctifier and Guide, Comforter and Healer; giving up your whole self unto this one God, to be his, and his only, forever." In his Half-Century Sermon, preached in 1828, Dr. Ripley says that, excepting upon the doctrine of the Trinity, his sentiments had not "materially changed" during the fifty years reviewed. "On the other doctrines," he proceeds to say, "such as the early apostacy of man; moral human depravity; regeneration, that is, a moral change of heart and life in sinners, in order to happiness and heaven; the need of divine influence to effect that change; justification, through faith in Christ, to all who repent and obey the gospel; Jesus Christ, the minister of reconciliation to God, and meritorious agent and medium of mercy to penitent sinners; charity and holiness as necessary to the happiness of heaven; a judgment to

come, by the Son of God, when the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal; on these and similar doctrines, I have been full in believing and constant in preaching."

Doubtless the change in his preaching was partly in the relative prominence and emphasis which he gave to what, to the end, he named the "doctrines of grace." In his earlier sermons we find the most frequent references to "man's apostacy," and to Christ as "the only door of hope to sinners." Nor are there now many pulpits in which these truths are enforced with greater distinctness and vigor. That this was true to the last we are not sure. But the change had partial reference also, we suspect, to the stress he laid upon the importance of standing up for "the faith once delivered to the saints." That good men may honestly differ, and that freedom of thought is to be accorded as well as claimed, few would call in question. But the obligation to fellowship with those who vitally differ, may be so asserted as to create an impression that nothing is sufficiently sure to be infinitely important. It is often by such a process, undesigned but no less fatal, that, in the hearer's, if not the preacher's mind, the "rock of salvation" is buried out of sight. We have thought there might be detected in Dr. Ripley's sermons, more and more frequent pleas for fellowship with a rejection of what to the end he seemed to regard as foundation truths; pleas which may have led others to look upon Scriptural belief with an indifference he never felt.

In looking over the records of the ancient church from which the founders of this came forth, which, by the courtesy of its present esteemed pastor, we have been permitted to do, we find there an important record. It is of especial interest to us, in connection with the beginnings of our own separate church history. It appears in a report

signed by Ezra Ripley and Barzillai Frost, pastors of that church, and Reuben Brown, Nehemiah Ball, and Elisha Tolman, deacons, and unanimously adopted by the church in March, 1841. The part of present interest is as follows: "The covenant of this church was formerly a creed. It included all the doctrines of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism. In 1795, these were all left out except the Trinity. In 1826 the Trinity was left out."

It was this last mentioned act, which moved a company of good and true men and women to separate themselves from a church, pastor, and place of worship to which they were tenderly bound, and ask to be organized into *The Trinitarian Congregational Church of Concord.*

The purpose of these men and women was not to introduce any new faith, or new order of worship. It was to rescue and perpetuate that form of doctrine which, in the old church itself, they and their fathers had been taught, and taught to cherish; and from which, after nearly two hundred years, that church had now deliberately and formally turned away. With much of its present teaching they had as yet no occasion for dissatisfaction. The ancient Bible doctrines of human sin and of man's redemption through Christ alone, with more or less of clearness and force, were still there preached. But, with a true instinct, it was perceived that in and around the truth of the deity of Christ, centers all that is precious and permanent in Christian faith and revealed religion.

In a comparatively recent number of what is now named the *Unitarian Review* (Feb. 1874), I find these sentences: "It," that is, Orthodoxy, "is based upon the profoundest needs of man. It appeals to man's fears and hopes and aspirations. It makes God wrathful, yet wonderfully tender; a sovereign, yet a brother, a friend, a companion, a helper. Not much is accomplished when it is proved

that Jesus is not God. When we do this, he ceases to be a central fact, a leader, a Saviour. Only God in his infinitude can be these. Only he can satisfy our uttermost needs. No finite being, however perfect or glorious, can do it."

So felt those who took alarm at the removal of the crown of deity from the head of their "leader and Saviour." In their judgment no part of the gospel structure could long stand secure with this, the keystone, removed. How far the logic of events has proved that they were right, we need not here pause to affirm.

This church was organized by an ecclesiastical council June 5, 1826. Rev. Lyman Beecher, then of Boston, was moderator. The call to this council was signed by John Vose, Mercy Vose, David Hubbard, Elizabeth Thoreau, Jane Thoreau, Maria Thoreau, Eliza Stacy, Phebe Wheeler, and Martha Whiting. To these nine persons,—one of whom, Maria Thoreau, still survives, and, for this occasion, sends us good cheer, and a promise to meet us "at the golden gate," letters of dismission from the old church had been granted for this purpose. Seven others were ready to join them. Moses Davis, and Louisa W. Davis had letters from the church in New Ipswich, N. H., Susan Hubbard from that in Brattleboro, Vt., and Joseph C. Green from the old church. Nathan Rice, Lucy Green, and Mary Whiting desired to be received upon profession of their faith. These sixteen constituted the original church.

Thirteen days before had been laid the corner-stone of this house of worship. And, though not ready for dedication until the December following, it was made to serve for the public exercises of this occasion. The Moderator of the council preached the sermon. The sermon at the dedication of the meeting-house was by Rev. Samuel

Green, also of Boston; and a printed copy of it is in our public library. In the discourse last named, "the leading principle in organizing this church and erecting this house" is set forth in the following terms: "It is not," says the preacher, "personal disaffection; it is not jealousy, rivalship, or party spirit in any of its forms. It is that these parents and children, these friends and neighbors, with their unborn posterity, may enjoy the faithful dispensation of those pure and holy truths which flowed from the lips of Christ and his inspired servant Paul." These truths, he goes on to say, 'are those of one living and true God, who has manifested himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost; of the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by his sufferings and death, has made a perfect atonement for sin; of the destitution of any holy affections of all men previous to regeneration; of free pardon and eternal life as God's gift through Christ, to every penitent believer; of the personality, presence and work of the Holy Spirit; and of the eternal awards of the righteous on the one hand, and the finally impenitent on the other.' These truths, with some refinement and more of theological precision, were embodied in the Confession of Faith and Covenant adopted by the church.

Until the following January, the pulpit was usually supplied by Rev. Asa Rand of Boston. Rev. Daniel S. Southmayd of Castleton, Vt., was then invited to its pastorate, and having accepted the call, was ordained the following April. Meanwhile others had been received to membership; and in June Messrs. John White, who had served in the same office in the old church, John Vose and Moses Davis, were elected deacons.

The church was now fully launched. And it went forward with ardor, diligence and not a little self-denial. Mrs. S. Dunbar gave a large Bible, and Mr. Samuel B.

Simonds a hymn-book, for the pulpit. A mahogany table, still well preserved, was given by Miss S. P. Hosmer. The meeting-house and bell had cost about $6,000. It had been agreed to pay their minister $600, as an annual salary; a large one for those days. But they did not feel themselves crushed by these self-assumed burdens. Four months after the settlement of a pastor, they voted to build a chapel, and proceeded forthwith to do it. Sabbath schools were established. A weekly prayer-meeting was sustained. The monthly concert was observed. Societies were formed to deepen interest in missionary work. Nor was so much self-denial and ardor without those more precious fruits which alone can satisfy a truly Christian ambition. Mr. Southmayd's pastorate terminated, by his own request, in the summer of 1832. Up to this time ninety-nine had been enrolled in the membership of the church; fifty-three by profession, and thirty by letter, during the ministry of its first pastor. Of these ninety-nine, Miss Maria Thoreau, Mrs. Almira Wier, Mr. and Mrs. Francis Hunt, Mrs. Abiel Wheeler, and Miss Nancy Wright, still survive, and retain their connection with us.

After his dismission, Mr. Southmayd for a time edited a paper in Lowell. Subsequently he was an editor and preacher in New York; and finally went to Fort Bend, Texas, where, in 1857, he died at the age of 35.

During the next nineteen years, the church had, besides temporary and brief stated supplies, three pastors. These were Revs. John Wilder, James Means, and William L. Mather.

Rev. Mr. Wilder came from Charlton, where he had been previously settled. He was installed in August, 1833, and remained six years. The record of a brother minister concerning him was: "a good man and much esteemed." He received forty-eight into the church; of

whom thirty-two came by profession. After his dismission, he went to Michigan; but, his health failing, he returned to the East, and died at Cambridgeport in 1844, aged 48.

Rev. Mr. Means was ordained in January, 1840. His ministry of four years was marked by a revival, during which meetings were held every afternoon and evening for a week. Forty-three were added to the church; twenty-nine by profession. To an unusual degree he won the respect of the community and the affection of his own people. This was his first and only pastorate. After his dismission he took charge of the Academy at Groton; then went to Europe; and after his return, resided at Groton, Andover and Auburndale. In the war of the Rebellion he served as Chaplain in the army, and died at Newbern, N. C., in 1863, aged 50.

The pastorate of Rev. Mr. Mather began in the autumn of 1844, and continued a little more than four years. He received fifteen to the church; five by profession. Singleness of purpose, devotion to his work, self-sacrifice, and trust, were said to be prominent traits in his character. During the second year of his pastorate the church, which for ten years had received aid from the Home Missionary Society, once more became self-supporting. After his removal from Concord, he was settled at Mattapoisett, then at Ann Arbor, Mich., and other places at the West. He served for a time as Chaplain in the army; and died at Andover in 1868, at the age of 62.

From the beginning of 1849 to near the end of 1851, the pulpit was supplied by Revs. J. Merrill, Luther Farnham, and Daniel Foster.

Our hurried review has brought us to the end of the first quarter of a century of our own history; and to a period within the easy memory of many present. Two hundred and twenty had been admitted to membership in

the church, of whom a considerable number remain and participate in the scenes of this occasion.

At the ministry of the years which follow, we need only glance. Near the end of 1851, Rev. Luther H. Angier began what proved to be the longest pastoral service the church had yet enjoyed. He was never installed, but remained seven years. After him came Rev. Charles B. Smith, who stayed a year and a half. Then followed Rev. Edmund S. Potter, who remained three years. Rev. Frank Haley had hardly entered upon his work, when sickness laid him aside. Rev. N. S. Folsom supplied the pulpit six months. Rev. C. H. S. Williams was called in October, 1867, and dismissed in the summer of 1870. Rev. A. J. Rogers supplied a year. Your present pastor first occupied the pulpit in April, 1872, accepting your call to the pastorate in June. He has now entered upon the fifth year of his work among you. During the twenty-five years of which we now speak, one hundred and forty-seven have been added to the church; of whom forty-six, including a valuable accession from South Lincoln, have been received during the present pastorate.

In the fifty years of its existence, three hundred and sixty-seven names have been entered upon the roll of the church. Its present entire membership is one hundred and forty-three. Its resident membership is about one hundred.

But there are some things which deserve yet more particular notice. This church has always had a care to have a convenient, and, up to its means, attractive place of worship. The foundations of this house were laid before the church was organized. The chapel, which still so well answers our needs, was completed two years after. Some repairs were made upon the house in 1851, and the pulpit now in use was then set up. Four years later, $1,400

were expended in more extensive improvements. One year later still, witnessed the enclosure of the church grounds, and trees planted within the enclosure. Next came an organ for the choir. These improvements lasted until 1873. During this and the following years, the interior of the house was again reconstructed, and greatly beautified. The old gallery was replaced by new and more sightly ones, the pews were rebuilt, new windows were put in, furnaces were procured, the walls were frescoed, the roof was slated, the sheds and grounds were put in new and more pleasing order. These, with other changes, cost about $6,000. At this time, partly by purchase and partly by gift, all the pews became the property of the society.

This church has never been behind its most generous neighbors in the support of its ministers. Mr. Southmayd received as his annual salary, $600; Mr. Wilder, $700; Mr. Means, and Mr. Mather $600; Mr. Angier $700; Mr. Potter $800; Mr. Haley $1,400; Mr. Williams $1,600. Since the autumn of 1874 your present pastor has received $2,000. It is interesting to compare these figures with the sums paid in earlier times. Rev. Peter Bulkeley, the first minister of the town, received £70; Rev. Edward Bulkeley £80—reduced in 1694, when "by reason of great age" he relinquished active service, to £30; Mr. Estabrook £80, half in money and half in grain; Mr. Whiting £100 as a settlement, and £100 as an annual salary, with an increase as the value of the public currency depreciated; Mr. Bliss £500 as a settlement, and £200 as a salary, in "old-tenor province bills of credit;" Mr. Emerson £100 as a settlement and £100 as a salary; Mr. Ripley £500 as a settlement, and £100 as salary, until 1812, when the salary was made $750.

In matters of moral reform this church has never been

slow or late. The council which ordained its first pastor, noted with approbation "the arrangement of the church and society in not offering spirituous liquors at the dinner of the council." In 1833 entire abstinence from the use of ardent spirits, as a drink, was made a condition of church membership. As early as 1836, it was voted that no person engaged in slaveholding should be admitted to Christian fellowship or communion, or invited to perform any of the duties of the ministry. From 1842 until 1848 a "Ladies Emancipation Society" spent one evening a week in prayer, discussion and work, in behalf of the slave. The avails of the work were usually sent to escaped slaves in Canada.

Though not indisposed to changes which promised substantial good, the church has never been given to ill-advised innovations. Its articles of faith and its covenant were reconstructed in 1868; the intention being to improve their form, and not materially to change their substance. In 1872, the second preaching service was transferred from the afternoon to the evening.

Our Sabbath school is as old as the church itself. Nathan Robbins and Francis Hunt, both of whom are with us to-day, were its first superintendents. In 1829 a branch school of twenty-three scholars was formed in the Factory district, and another of twenty in the North-east district. Both were visited every week by the teachers at the center. Schools were soon after formed in the East and North districts. At half-past 9 o'clock, on Sabbath mornings, there was a teachers' prayer-meeting. Some, if not all, the branch schools held their sessions after the public services of the day. A worker in the school forty years ago, Mrs. E. J. Marsh, writing of things as they then were, says: "The church was in its infancy. Still it was vigorous; and rarely have I found greater interest in

a Sabbath school. We had some live teachers." And not only in those days, but ever since, it is safe to say, the self-denial and Christian zeal evinced in the Sabbath school has marked the degrees of spiritual prosperity enjoyed by the church.

It is pleasant to speak of the benevolent work of the church, for here too we have a record of which we need not be altogether ashamed. A ladies' sewing society, still alive and active, was organized in 1828. "Its first meeting, numbering eight or ten of us," writes Miss Maria Thoreau, "was held at our house." It has had its home and foreign departments; and has contributed to the causes it has sought to serve, not less than $3,200. Two years later, in 1830, another benevolent society was formed in the North district. Its leader was Miss Martha Munroe. At first it was composed of children; and, as such, held on its way for seventeen years. It was then merged in what has, for almost thirty years more, been known as the "Union Bible Society." This society has contributed to the State Bible Society more than $3,000, of which a fair proportion has come from our own congregation. In 1837 still another association was formed, and took the name of the "Concord Juvenile Missionary Society." This is now the "Sabbath School Missionary Association," and, for many years its annual reports have been prepared by its ever-devoted secretary, Miss Mary Munroe.* Its contributions have reached the sum of $1,850. How much has been contributed through other channels, in all these years, it is now impossible to tell. We find the record of more than $2,500, contributed to the American Board since the beginning of 1852. Nor have other objects been forgotten. Home Missions, Publication

* For the most important facts in this part of our discourse, we are largely indebted to a manuscript sketch of the church, prepared by the same pen.

Societies, the American Missionary Association, societies for church-building and for the education of young men for the ministry, have received more or less regular aid; while objects of more transient interest have not been turned unhelped away. What sacrifice has been shown here, in the support of the institutions of religion among ourselves, and elsewhere, cannot be now told. Doubtless the record is kept in heaven. But it is safe to say that few churches near or afar have done, or are doing, in this respect more valiantly than this.

It would be quite too serious an omission were we to make no mention of the place which has been filled, in the active piety of this church, by circles of prayer. We have heard something of a band of young men who used to kneel around an old chest in the south-west corner room, in the third story of Deacon Vose's house. Jonas Melvin occupied the room, and Nathan Robbins, Francis Hunt, Samuel B. Simonds, Thomas Butterfield and Nathan Rice, were among those who composed the band. "We seldom met anywhere," says one of the survivors, "when religion was not the principal theme of conversation." Referring to scenes in which she herself participated, Mrs. Lydia H. (Hunstable) Jones writes: "Many of those who longed for a more active spiritual life were wont to meet with Mr. and Mrs. Thompson, Miss Mary Minot, and at a few other places, and spend the evening in religious exercises in a very quiet way, Thus the Marys, Marthas, and Phebes, with the brethren Vose, Davises, White, and a few others, became the nucleus around which gathered the Trinitarian church." We shall be excused for quoting at still greater length from a letter from Miss Thoreau. She says: "Mr. Moses Davis we considered the founder of the church. . . . . He certainly was the first and only one that held communication with our family on the sub-

ject, for you must remember we were few in number. . . Our first little prayer meetings were held in Mr. Charles Davis's house, where the Andover students would occasionally be present, which was a great help to us. After the church was organized, or rather before, they were removed to Mr. Vose's large parlor, where the accommodations afforded more ample room. I remember a Sabbath Dr. Beecher preached to us, when the windows were even lined with attentive listeners outside. We had much to enjoy, and much to struggle with, in those days. Mr. Southmayd's first evening with us in that room was enjoyed as a foretaste of the future, and with what gratitude we hailed his ordination. I remember the hymn Dr. Beecher read on that occasion:

> "Behold, the sure foundation stone
> Which God in Zion lays."

The Friday evening prayer meeting then started has never been given up; never, so far as I am able to learn, suspended. There have been times when the number in attendance was small; times of great discouragement, when, without the help of a pastor, a faithful, heroic few, some of whom are with us and praying still, saved the spiritual life, not to say the very existence, of the church. Early in its history a few of the mothers of the church, led by Mrs. Wilder, wife of the pastor, formed a maternal association. Among its first members who still survive, and, after forty years of prayer and hope and blessing, continue their interest in it, were Mrs. Elisha Farrar, Mrs. Abiel Wheeler, Mrs. Henry A. Wheeler, Mrs. R. P. Damon, Mrs. Darius Hubbard, and Mrs. Jabez Reynolds. Some of its very early meetings were with Mrs. Ephraim Wheeler, and Mrs. Woodward. But these have now, for many years, been commonly held with Mrs. Damon.

With quiet, unfaltering faith, they have followed the children and youth of two generations with affectionate solicitude; and have lived to see many of their prayers already answered.

We have now reached the proper termination of our historical review. Brief and imperfect as it is, does it not afford ample reason for gratitude to our Heavenly Helper?

And if there has been much to strengthen our faith, in the Lord's dealings with us in the past, there is much also to stimulate our ardor and renew our courage, in the outlook of the present. The foundations of this church were laid in days of darkness and doubt. Time will not permit us to rehearse the causes and steps which had led to great, and as many felt, saddening changes in many of the ancient churches of our State. These are not sudden. The preparation had been long, the process slow. Doubtless there had been growing carelessness on the part of both ministers and people. At the beginning of the present century, there was but one pulpit in New England in which it was openly taught that Jesus is not God. That was King's Chapel in Boston. But there were others in which the assertion of his deity was feebly made. There were many in, and over, which grave doubts had begun to settle. There was a growing indifference to doctrine, and disposition to assert its unimportance. But it was not until 1815, eleven years before this church was organized, that this latent doubt and denial was openly avowed. It was then that separations began to take place; that in one, and another pulpit, the old faith began to be boldly repudiated. There were then not far from three hundred parishes in the State. Within a little time nearly one-fourth of these had avowed Unitarian views, or retained Unitarian pastors. The larger part of these were in the Eastern coun-

ties. In Boston, the Old South and Park Street alone stood firm; and the former of these was narrowly saved. But the new party was stronger in other respects than in the number of its churches. 'It had secured the University, the school which was cherishing the future scholars and professional men of the Commonwealth. It had an immense preponderance of the opulence and influence of the capital. It had the patronage of many of the ablest men in the State,— whose judgment, had they been theologians or persons of profound religious earnestness, might have wanted the authority it possessed.'

It was in such a day that, from many an ancient church, a little band went forth, to lay anew the foundations of a cherished, and, as it seemed to them, grand and saving faith. They did this with a courage and trust and self-denial, which we at this day can but feebly comprehend. They surrendered associations as dear to them as to others. They left behind, not only cherished memories, and sanctuaries they had helped to build, but, as was here the case, vested funds, given for the support of doctrines they went forth to maintain, and which were now repudiated by those by whom these funds were retained. All this they did, with firm confidence that the Lord would go with and help them. Nor was theirs an ill-founded confidence. The end of fifty years is witness to quite another state of things. Says Dr. Ellis, himself one of their number: "The Unitarians expected that the change of opinions, which had long been gradually working, . . . would advance more rapidly, through discussion and division, till, before the interval of fifty years had, as now, elapsed, Orthodoxy would have become a thing of the past, while Unitarianism would be the prevailing type of religion. Unitarians did expect this rapid success, this form of triumph; and they have been disappointed." There are

now, in our entire country, less than 355 churches which bear that name. Hardly more than two-thirds of these have settled pastors or permanent supplies. Upon the other hand, the growth and multiplication of what are known as Orthodox Congregational churches has been rapid and steady. Of these there are now in our own State alone 517, of which more than one-third have been formed since our own. Within this time twenty have been organized in the city of Boston. It is to be also remembered that churches of other names have come in to assert, quite as clearly as we can do, the great gospel truths for which we stand. Of these, there are in the Boston of to-day not less than one hundred and twenty of various Protestant names, over against one-fourth of that number in which these truths are denied. Looking abroad over our whole land we see 70,000, in all but a fraction of which Christ is honored "even as they honor the Father." Whether, therefore, we look at our own history only, or take a broader view and include our whole land in our survey, we may lift up our voices in humble exultation, and say: "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

But only in God's book can the wonderful history of a single church, for any single half-century, be fully written. Underneath and behind all the facts we have tried to recall, others have been transpiring upon which God and angels have looked with deepest interest. How many have here been converted from the error of their ways, and made the happy children of God, it is not for us to say. Nor can we tell what silent victories have been won over temptation and inward evil; what unseen service has been rendered in honor of Christ; what joy there has been in tribulation, what triumph in death. All that, if God sees that it will be best, we shall know by and by.

Meanwhile, let us not forget to give thanks that we live

at peace with those from whom conscience compelled our fathers, of a generation ago, to come forth. Happily we live in times when there is less of sharpness and rancor than there once was between those who religiously differ. We do not love what we regard as the distinctive truths of the gospel of Christ less. God forbid that we ever should! We believe there is nothing like these to feed and stretch the intellect, to purify and exalt the affections, and, after a divine pattern, to mould the inner and outer life. More than that, we believe that these are the power of God unto salvation. If we do not mean to stand by them; to give to them a large place in our minds and hearts; to affirm them with our lips, and seek to illustrate them in our lives; and, as wisdom and grace shall be given, to persuade men to their practical acceptance,— then for us, as a church, this community has no longer any need. We have no excuse for being. God forbid that we should ever be so unfaithful to our high and sacred trust! But we have learned that a man may have the purest of creeds, and be bad at heart; inwardly and outwardly as far from true faith and real holiness as an untaught heathen; and that, upon the other hand, one whose intellectual apprehensions are full of error may, down in his heart, have those principles of gospel faith and love which shall make him a child of God and heir of heaven. We shall be careful therefore how we say to any: "Stand by thyself, for I am holier than thou!"

I do not think I need especially to charge you to seek the things that make for peace among yourselves. I know not that I have found a church where there is more of mutual forbearance and good-will than has seemed to exist here. This comes in part of the fact that hitherto few have allied themselves with our cause, who have not been drawn by a sincere regard for the truths we teach. It is

no misfortune to us that those who, though trained in our own faith, have come among us with other than Christian ambitions, have gone in other ways. There are few ties so strong as a common attachment to great truths, felt to be from God. But increased prosperity brings many dangers. By watchfulness and prayer alone can these be escaped.

But already I have wearied your patience. Forty-nine and a half years ago, when the house in which we are now assembled, was dedicated to God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the fervid preacher closed with these words: "Dear brethren, live together in love; be eminently spiritual and holy; meek, yet firm; contend earnestly for the faith, but only with spiritual weapons; and may you meet at last, on Mount Zion above, thousands saved through your sacrifices, and be permitted to sing with them the song of Moses and the Lamb forever and ever." So say we to day. Let this be our steadfast aim, cherishing the firm persuasion that though tongues may cease, and knowledge pass away, "the Word of our God endureth forever." And "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins, in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, and his Father; to him be glory and dominion, forever and ever. Amen."

THE HALF-CENTURY CELEBRATION.

The Trinitarian Congregational Church in Concord, Mass., celebrated the Fiftieth Anniversary of its organization on Sunday and Monday, the 4th and 5th days of June, 1876.

The following persons constituted the Committees appointed to arrange for the occasion :

General Committee of Arrangements. — Edward P. Parker, Francis Hunt, Daniel Tarbell, James Farrar, Edward C. Damon, Thomas Todd, Charles Thompson, Miss Mary Munroe, Mrs. Elijah Wood.

Committee on Invitation.— Daniel Tarbell, Francis Hunt, Mrs. R. P. Damon, Miss Mary Munroe, Mrs. Elijah Wood.

Committee on Exercises.— Charles Thompson, Edward P. Parker, Rev. H. M. Grout.

Committee on Hospitality.— George F. Wheeler, Henry S. Damon, George M. Baker 2d, John M. Gourgas, Willard T. Farrar.

Committee on Collation.— Mrs. E. P. Parker, Miss Harriet Hubbard, Mrs. Prescott H. Hosmer, Mrs. Alonzo Tower, Mrs. George B. Davis, Mrs. George M. Baker, Mrs. John W. Farrar, Mrs. Thomas Todd, Miss Ida M. Gray.

Director of Music.—Thomas Todd.

The public exercises of the Sabbath consisted of an Historical Discourse by the pastor in the morning, and a sermon, on the benefits of public worship, by J. G. Davis,

D. D., of Amherst, N. H., in the evening. Of the former, the reader has a copy in his hands. The sermon of Dr. Davis, a son of Concord, and an early worker in the church, of which his father, Josiah Davis, Esq., was one of the first and most influential members, was based upon Psalm cxxii. 6, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee;" and in matter and manner, was a rare production. Appropriate floral decorations were tastefully arranged about the pulpit; and, both morning and evening, the house was filled with attentive listeners.

On Monday evening the church was again opened for brief addresses and a Social Reunion. The assembly, made up of past and present members of the church and congregation, with their invited friends, once more filled the house. The pastor presided. Rev. H. P. DeForest, of Westboro, opened the exercises with prayer. Letters were presented, from which selections were read, from Rev. C. H. S. Williams, and Rev. Frank Haley, former pastors of the church; Revs. Amos Foster and E. E. Strong; and numerous former members of the church.

Rev. Edmund S. Potter, of West Somerville, made the opening address, and gave interesting reminiscences of the times of the war, when he was pastor of the church.

J. W. Chickering, D. D., of Wakefield, spoke particularly of his venerated grandfather, Dea. John White.

Rev. Leonard Luce, of Westford, sketched the characters of the first pastors of the church.

Rev. Frederick Reed, of East Taunton, emphasized the importance of a seasonable preparation of accurate church histories.

Rev. Luther H. Angier, of Everett, referred to the improvements made within and about the church during his pastorate, and closed with a "semi-centennial song," contributed by Mrs. Angier.

S. C. Damon, D. D., of Honolulu, Sandwich Islands, was happy to renew acquaintance with that portion of the church, which bore his name, after a separation of two hundred and thirty years.

J. G. Davis, D. D., recalled the spirit and sacrifices of the early members of the church, and the struggles and cost, and prayer and faith, with which its foundations were laid.

Dr. Bartlett of the Unitarian church, responded to a call for a speech, with some pleasing reminiscences of the time of the separation.

Rev. Daniel Butler, of Waverly, gathered up the good things others had left unsaid, and, with his usual felicity, brought the speech making of the evening to an end.

A choice and ample collation was now served by the ladies of the congregation; and another hour spent in the revival of old memories, and the renewal of the ties of other days; when, with gratitude for past mercies and confident expectation of good things to come, the company dispersed.

(Dec., 1888, 20,000)

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY.

One volume allowed at a time, and obtained only by card; to be kept 14 days (or seven days in the case of fiction and juvenile books published within one year) without fine; not to be renewed; to be reclaimed by messenger after 21 days, who will collect 20 cents besides fine of 2 cents a day, including Sundays and holidays; not to be lent out of the borrower's household, and not to be transferred; to be returned at this Hall.

Borrowers finding this book mutilated or unwarrantably defaced, are expected to report it; and also any undue delay in the delivery of books.

*** No claim can be established because of the failure of any notice, to or from the Library, through the mail.

The record below must not be made or altered by borrower.